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## **Town of Manchester Vermont EMS Study Project Summary**

Municipal Resources Inc. (MRI) is a New England based corporation that was established more than 30 years ago and is very well known for its expertise in public safety including police, fire and EMS operations. MRI has completed hundreds of projects from Aiken, South Carolina to Presque Isle, Maine. However, we are best known for our expertise in working with and providing viable solutions for New England municipalities. In 2015 MRI conducted a public safety study for the communities of Manchester and Dorset, this study included an evaluation of Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

MRI provides professional, technical, and management support services to municipalities and schools throughout New England. Municipal Resources operates offices in two locations in New Hampshire, and one in Massachusetts. We are registered to do business in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Among the areas of expertise available are department assessments, organizational studies, personnel recruitment, personnel administration, collective bargaining, community and economic development, budget/finance, and general management.

MRI wants to help solve problems and provide solutions for future success. We do not assess blame; rather, we simply work to gain an understanding of past events to build a framework for future success. We do not put forth idealistic, unachievable, or narrowly focused solutions.

Our objectives are:

- To help agencies obtain maximum value for limited tax dollars.
- To identify and help communities manage the risks associated with public safety functions.
- To raise public awareness of the value and professionalism of their public resources.
- To help local leaders develop and execute plans that best meet their community's needs, given the resources available.

MRI utilizes practitioner-based teams of subject matter experts to provide municipalities with experienced based observations and recommendations. The Select Board and Town Manager asked MRI to provide an outside evaluation of EMS, evaluate pandemic based risk and if warranted, make recommendations for change. Our objective during this project was to concentrate on the service level provided to the Town of Manchester.

Observations (*italicized*) and findings (**bolded**) of the current Manchester EMS study include the following:

#### **Observations:**

1. *The current EMS provider has a deep-rooted internal culture that is not focused on the Town of Manchester as the largest customer (66-70% of volume).*
2. *Despite multiple requests, the current EMS provider has not substantively participated in any pandemic related planning with the Town of Manchester.*
3. *Town Public Safety Departments and the Town Manager indicated that there was a lack of integration, coordination and training with the current EMS provider.*
4. *Numerous interviews revealed a perceived lack of EMS provider involvement within the community (Manchester).*
5. *Members of the EMS providers Board of Directors indicated that Manchester is one of five of the communities served and all deserve equal (1/5th) consideration.*
6. *Members of the EMS providers Board indicated that their organization would not participate in community specific events unless all member communities benefited.*
7. *The 2015 recommendations provided through a public safety report were not substantively considered. None of the 13 recommendations were implemented.*
8. *The lack of a sense of urgency/rapid response to calls was noted as a universal interview theme and ongoing operational concern.*
9. *Manchester Public Safety Officials indicated that they regularly receive complaints and concerns relative to EMS operations.*

#### **Findings:**

10. **Manchester has the highest call volume and pays 68.5% of increasing fees (\$190,000 offset by rent) (49.9% of population served).**
11. **There is no communication between the Manchester representative on the NRS Board and Select Board or Town Manager. This is atypical.**
12. **Interviews revealed a consistent theme that NRS is largely unresponsive to Manchester's needs and requests which are far greater than the other communities served due to both population and serving as a regional hub.**
13. **The revenue stream is not optimized (towns pickup the remainder, and Manchester picks up the majority of that balance).**

14. There is excessive downtime based on call volume.
15. Customer service issues have been documented by public safety officials and health care providers in Manchester.
16. Despite being the largest stakeholder Manchester has little power to effect change under the current system.
17. The Covid 19 Pandemic has strained resources and produced an increasing service demand.
18. Pandemic planning lacks EMS involvement which has expanded the risk profile of the community.
19. Response times are atypical considering that a staffed unit is based in Manchester.

**Conclusion:**

After careful consideration and reflection on industry best practice and the service level currently provided to the Town of Manchester, our team does not believe that Manchester is being well served by the current configuration of emergency medical services (EMS).